CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 12 February 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Naste Calovski (Yugoslavia)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 611th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I wish to extend a warm welcome, on behalf of the Conference, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, His Excellency Andrei Kozyrev. A graduate of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and holder of a high scientific degree in history, the Minister is the author of a number of publications on arms control and disarmament, as well as on the work of the United Nations and current international questions. He has wide experience in the work of international organizations, having been Director of the competent Department, in which he was actively involved in disarmament subjects, and participated frequently in the sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations and other international forums. In October 1990 he was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, a high-level position in which he was confirmed in October last year. As this is the first time that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation is visiting the Conference on Disarmament to address it, his presence here today assumes particular importance. I am sure that all members of the Conference will follow his statement with special interest, as it will provide us with a substantial contribution for our future work.

I have on my list of speakers for this meeting the representatives of the Russian Federation, Germany and the Netherlands.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, His Excellency Andrei Kozyrev.

Mr. KOZYREV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): Allow me to begin by expressing the pleasure and the honour that the privilege of speaking from this high rostrum gives me and by welcoming many old friends in this room. I should also like to wish you, Mr. President, the representative of a friendly country, success in your work as President of the Conference and to assure you of our full support; let me also express our appreciation to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Komatina, for all he has done to make its work effective.

Permit me now to read out a message to the Conference from the President of the Russian Federation, Boris N. Yeltsin:

> "My greetings to the participants in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament! This year marks the thirtieth anniversary since the time when multilateral negotiations on the limitation and reduction of armaments began in Geneva. Over these years, they have scored important results: treaties and agreements limiting the arms race in outer space and on Earth. Of special significance is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, whose strictest observance and strengthening is today's international political priority.

(Mr. Kozyrev, Russian Federation)

Recent talks with the leaders of many States and the results of the summit meeting of the United Nations Security Council show that qualitatively new, friendly relations are being created - in the long run, even relations of alliance - between former potential adversaries. A unique opportunity is emerging to rid ourselves through joint efforts of the over-armament we have all inherited from the cold war.

Given these circumstances, the Conference on Disarmament, too, must proceed to solve unprecedently bold tasks. First of all, it is essential this very year to complete the drafting of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

I wish to assure you that Russia will honestly and openly cooperate with other countries in achieving the lofty goals of the Conference on Disarmament."

Mr. President, the main orientations of the policy of the Russian Federation in the field of limitation and reduction of armaments have recently been set out in the United Nations and during summit meetings in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and France.

They are predicated on the firm conviction that the new Russia is not even a potential adversary of other States, whether in the West, East, North or South.

This world outlook of ours, as our contacts have shown, is shared by other States. All this creates a fundamentally new political context, applying also to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The "disarmament game" between ideological adversaries trying to outsmart one another is over.

From now on, the Conference on Disarmament can and must become a forum of like-minded people faced with the task of clearing away the log-jam of the physical substructure of past confrontation.

And here there will be a job to do for everyone - both for the former East-West opponents and for those who sought to help them reach compromises - the non-aligned and neutral countries. The latter played an extremely important role in preventing the "cold" war of that time from escalating into a "hot" one. Now, we are counting on associating the vast intellectual potential of their experts in the task of dismantling the military juggernaut and, most of all, on their active involvement in the arms-reduction and confidence-building measures themselves.

These are not easy tasks, for behind the gigantic military machines generated during the years of the cold war are the future lives of people, immense production capacities and mountains of weapons. Thus, the problem of military conversion - the conversion of military industry, scientific knowledge and human resources acquires special urgency.

(Mr. Kozyrev, Russian Federation)

The gap between the new political realities and the military technological situation presents itself in the most dramatic terms in the fact that the strategic forces of the nuclear Powers, despite their political positions, remain targeted on each other's territories. The absurdity of such a situation is self-evident. The problem, therefore, is how to transfer the revolution in political thinking and mutual perceptions to the plane of military technical solutions.

Of course, the best solution would be the total elimination of nuclear weapons but we are aware that this cannot be done overnight. Consequently, we have to look for other, possibly less radical but no less effective, ways of removing the danger.

It is in this context that one should view our proposal that the strategic offensive weapons which Russia and the United States will retain after the upcoming deep cuts should not be targeted on United States or Russian facilities, respectively, nor, indeed, on other countries. Tentatively, I would suggest the following ideas for implementing this proposal.

First, we might consider the question of taking off alert status the strategic forces of Russia, the United States and other nuclear Powers that are targeted on one another's territories and facilities, thereby attaining a kind of "zero action-readiness" of nuclear weapons.

Secondly, separate storage of nuclear weapons' delivery vehicles and warheads could play a useful role. In other words, the ICBMs would be on launchers without their front sections. SLBMs and SLCMs would be unloaded from submarines, which in turn would be berthed in home ports, and the nuclear weapons of heavy bombers, including nuclear ALCMs would be kept in centralized storage depots. That would provide assurance against the unauthorized or accidental use of nuclear weapons. Another advantage of such a measure is that it would be verifiable and the details of verification, I am sure, could be agreed upon.

Thirdly, there is a need for a fundamental reassessment of the entire military-strategic situation in the world and, accordingly, of nuclear military doctrines.

Lastly, is it not time to take a new look at the ideas proposed in the past concerning control of nuclear weapons by an international organization, for example, the United Nations?

Moreover, thought might be given to exchanging on a reciprocal basis among all nuclear Powers data on the number and types of existing nuclear weapons, the quantity of fissionable materials and on nuclear-weapons production, storage and elimination facilities. Agreement to that effect could be reached at the Conference on Disarmament, in which all the nuclear Powers are represented and which has experience in dealing with similar issues in the context of the negotiations on chemical weapons.

(Mr. Kozyrev, Russian Federation)

At the same time, we believe that the main contribution to resolving all questions relating to nuclear disarmament must now be made by Russia and the United States. Other nuclear Powers could join the process of nuclear disarmament later, when the nuclear arsenals of all the States possessing them will have become comparable. That is the impression we have of the position of the United Kingdom and France, with whose leaders we have only recently discussed these problems.

The issue of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems has arisen anew. Russia is adopting a complex of measures aimed at ensuring that the break-up of the former Soviet Union should not provoke such proliferation or to the emergence of several nuclear States in place of the USSR. It is our understanding that Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan will accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear countries.

The Russian Federation intends to become a full-fledged participant in the international Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). It supports the useful work being done by the "Australian group" on the non-proliferation of chemical weapons. Russia is setting up a State export-control system for "dual-purpose" materials and technology and the relevant laws are being drafted. Our approach on this issue is consistent with the position of other States members of the CIS, in line with the Alma-Ata agreements of last December.

The non-proliferation problem has also a human dimension. We share the concern of some countries about a possible "draining" of our experts engaged in the development of dangerous weapons, given the curtailment of military programmes in Russia and the lifting of restrictions on travel abroad. We are in favour of timely measures on this problem, measures which, naturally, are not contrary to international human rights standards, including freedom of travel.

We believe that a most effective solution would be the involvement of experts and scientists from Russia and other CIS States in major international conversion projects - in order to make maximum use of their vast scientific, intellectual and productive potential for peaceful, creative purposes. Of course, for such cooperation to be productive we need very soon to have an exchange of information, including information which in the past was in the "sensitive" category, i.e. information on the material and expertise potential of laboratories, research institutes and production facilities employed in the defence field. Without an exchange of information, cooperation in the area of conversion will be hampered.

Here, an important role could be played by the creation of an international scientific centre which would be responsible for coordinating research in such areas as fundamental and applied physics, alternate sources of energy including thermonuclear fusion, nuclear power plant safety, rehabilitation of the environment after pollution resulting from nuclear activities, destruction or alternate utilization of weapons of mass destruction, safe burial of wastes, etc.

(Mr. Kozyrev, Russian Federation)

We also support the ideas put forward in this regard by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, concerning the preparation and adoption of international measures to prevent unauthorized transfers of carriers of sensitive information.

Russia supports the arms-trade guidelines approved in London in October 1991 as well as the resolution on arms transparency adopted at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly. Beginning next year, we are prepared to participate in the submission of arms-trade data for inclusion in the Register to be compiled under the United Nations resolution.

At the same time, it is our understanding that, in keeping with the right to self-defence established in the United Nations Charter, any country can acquire arms in accordance, of course, with accepted international principles.

On this question, Russia is no longer guided by ideological approaches or concepts of military-force counteraction with respect to other major arms producers. We are open to cooperation in this field on a commercial basis with all States. Of course, in this we will strictly abide by the decisions of the international community regarding the non-delivery of weapons to particular countries, nor of course will we export weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems or their production technology. Likewise, we will refrain from military deliveries liable to destabilize the situation in a particular area.

We attach great importance to regional initiatives in the field of arms limitation and strengthening of security. We are convinced that they deserve support. Generally speaking, the sphere of regional disarmament and confidence-building measures may become one of the most important areas for the Conference on Disarmament.

We are, of course, in favour of activating the work of the Conference in such an important field as the prohibition of nuclear testing.

Russia is a convinced proponent of prevention of an arms race in outer space. We firmly advocate the maintenance of the ABM Treaty with the United States and the non-deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind.

Now a few words on our proposal on a joint global system of protection instead of the SDI. What we have in mind is a programme of joint research that, among other things, would help address the problem of preventing a brain drain from the defence complex of nuclear and space Powers. It is our hope that the results of such research in the area of advanced technologies can be used for peaceful purposes in the interests of the whole international community. A global system of protection must become not a new "Berlin wall" of the North against the South, but an effective safeguard protecting all countries from possible moves by adventurist, irresponsible politicians and terrorists.

(Mr. Kozyrev, Russian Federation)

Now, Mr. President, let me come back to the principal and most urgent task before the Conference: the completion of the negotiations on the total prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. What are now beginning to acquire special significance in the negotiations are the economic factors connected with compliance with the obligations under this agreement. This is quite natural since the Convention, unlike any other previously concluded multilateral disarmament agreements, will affect the broadest sectors of the economy. That is why Russia believes that it is extremely important that, while effectively blocking the roads to possession of chemical weapons, the Convention should take into account the legitimate economic interests of the parties to it and also be "economical" in the sphere of verification.

In particular, there are serious doubts whether the complete destruction of former chemical weapons production facilities would be advisable. Especially in view of our current economic difficulties, we believe that it would be more justified to leave open the possibility of utilizing some of the equipment and buildings of such former facilities for the purposes of peaceful production, subject of course, to the elimination of equipment directly connected with the production and filling of chemical weapons and the existence of other safeguards, including international verification that would reliably preclude any attempt to reconvert such facilities to activities prohibited under the Convention.

I shall not hide the fact that Russia faces extremely difficult problems in connection with the destruction of chemical weapons. It was not Russia that took the decisions which resulted in the presence on its territory of 40,000 tons of toxic substances that are difficult to eliminate, although we have assumed full responsibility for their destruction.

Russia possesses the technology required for the destruction of chemical weapons. The main problem is obtaining the consent of the population and local authorities for the construction of the necessary facilities. I think that international cooperation and some help from abroad could play a role in resolving these problems. Such cooperation could be instrumental in guaranteeing the ecological cleanness of the destruction process and in creating incentives among the local population for having such facilities nearby, etc. We would support the idea of creating a kind of "ecopolis" in areas where destruction facilities might be established.

It is necessary for all States ultimately to accede to the future Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. This is favoured by the momentous change that has occurred in the world situation. Fears that participation in the Convention might have negative effects on security are lessening. The guarantees of the Security Council are becoming more effective. It is now working as was envisaged by the founders of the United Nations; that, in any case, is how things are moving. Russia intends to so participate in this work as to make a weighty contribution to the strengthening of universal security. Of course, in all these matters we are cooperating most closely with other States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

(Mr. Kozyrev, Russian Federation)

I should like to take this opportunity, Mr. President, to wish success to the new Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador von Wagner, and to assure him of our unswerving support.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that now that the international community has entered a stage of what amounts to "landslide disarmament" and the agenda includes finding solutions to difficult military-technical questions of eliminating weapons, the tasks of the Conference are becoming immeasurably more complex. Nevertheless, we are convinced that it will successfully cope with them and we, for our part, have shared with you some ideas and suggestions which not so much contain answers to those questions as they demonstrate our desire to join you in seeking solutions.

I wish you success in your work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation for his important statement and for the kind words he addressed to me.

I wish, in particular, to thank him for the message addressed to us by the President of the Russian Federation, His Excellency Boris Yeltsin, which I am sure is appreciated by all members and non-members of the Conference participating in our work.

I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, Ambassador von Wagner.

Mr. von WAGNER (Germany): Mr. President, may I, through you, thank the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, His Excellency Andrei Kozyrev, for the kind words he addressed to Minister Genscher and to my humble self.

With our negotiations on the Chemical Weapons Convention entering a final stage and our common goal coming within reach, very practical issues become more and more important. I am referring to those issues related to the work of the Preparatory Committee and the establishment of the future organization. In this context, one important issue is the composition of the staff of the future Technical Secretariat and Inspectorate.

Today, in my capacity as head of the German delegation, I would like to reiterate what has always been our position in this respect: We believe that the recruitment of staff personnel must provide, of course, the appropriate verification expertise to the Technical Secretariat. This, however, would not be enough. It must also be ensured that personnel from all regions be included in the technical staff.

In this context, the German Government has welcomed the active role of Finland in research and development of analytical methods of verification, a project recognized and appreciated by all of us. Finland has also taken the lead in sharing the experience it has gained in this field, not only through

(Mr. von Wagner, Germany)

publication of a series of the well-known "Blue Books"; by organizing and conducting training courses for participants from developing countries, the Finnish Project continues to contribute substantively to the build-up or reinforcement of a pool of skilled technical personnel in the third world who could serve as inspectors under the future organization. More than 20 analytical experts from many developing countries will have attended these courses by the end of this year. Some of the participants reported to the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons on their positive experience.

Some time ago, Norway informed the Conference on Disarmament on plans to conduct similar training courses. I very much welcome the fact that other countries feel encouraged by Finland's example to organize their own training courses, thus recognizing the importance of such an endeavour.

Mr. President, I am pleased to inform the Conference on Disarmament today that Germany, like Norway, has decided to contribute to our common efforts by conducting a first such training course this year, which is intended to be complementary to, rather than duplicating, the Finnish programme. The aim of our two-week course is the training of analytical chemists in some of the specific methods and the use of instruments of the type needed for on-site verification tasks under the future Chemical Weapons Convention. The participants in the first Finnish training course of 1992 from Argentina, India, Mexico and Morocco have also been invited to attend this follow-up course, to be held at the NBC Defence Establishment in Munster from 1 to 12 June 1992.

The programme of the course, which is organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany, was set up in close cooperation and coordination with Finland. It concentrates on practical exercises to enable future inspectors to act on-site in a safe and efficient manner. The programme includes

the handling of CW agent samples, in connection with the use of personal protection equipment;

specific field sampling techniques and on-the-spot identification of samples using a mobile mass spectrometer;

the investigation of munitions using non-destructive interrogation methods.

The course will also touch on the issue of old chemical weapons destruction. Furthermore, it will include a visit to a plant site in the chemical industry in Germany.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Wagenmakers.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, upon your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We, the representatives of the CD member States, have been provided with palpable proof of the successful application of your diplomatic skill and talent in the discharge of duties pertaining to the high office that is yours. Most important, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons has been set to work smoothly without delay. Then, the package decision on the admission of non-member States forms no small part of the credit you raised. I would also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Horacio Arteaga of Venezuela, for his high-quality contribution to the CD's work, both in the last month of the 1991 session and during the following inter-sessional period.

It is a great honour for me to address this august body at the same meeting at which we were given the privilege to listen to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. I would like to underscore the warm welcome which you extended to Minister Andrei Kozyrev and to thank the Minister for his important thought-provoking address. I would be remiss, Mr. President, if I did not salute the representatives of so many observer States here in this room. I consider their presence in our midst as a commitment on their behalf to the objectives which the Conference on Disarmament is trying to attain.

As the Chairman of the 1991 Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons stated in introducing its report to the plenary on 6 February last, we have reached the final stage of the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention. We have set ourselves a deadline. And we are going to meet that deadline. Keeping that in mind, it is not too early to start thinking seriously about practical steps in preparation for the implementation of the convention.

Granted, a considerable amount of preparatory work has already been done. Studies have been made on the structure and cost of the future Organization on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) by, inter alia, the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, the Netherlands and independent consultants. Finland and the Netherlands jointly presented papers last year on the required laboratory facilities for the organization and their quality control. A wealth of material on the tasks of the Preparatory Commission can be found in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

Last August, when the Ambassadors to the CD visited The Hague with a view to familiarizing themselves with The Hague as the proposed seat of the OPCW, they were asked whether they thought a seminar on the OPCW, especially during its early years of existence, would assist our deliberations, here in Geneva. Encouraged by the many positive answers received, the competent Netherlands authorities have further examined the idea of holding such a seminar and decided to go ahead with it.

I take pleasure in announcing now that the Netherlands will organize a brief seminar on practical aspects of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in its early years. The seminar, under the title "OPCW, the First Five Years", will be held at The Hague on 8 and 9 May 1992.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

As to participation, Ambassadors or their deputies will be invited as well as a number of independent specialists on chemical weapons issues. All costs will be borne by the Netherlands Government. Further details on the seminar will be communicated in due time.

The seminar's agenda has not been entirely set as yet. The Netherlands delegation is, of course, receptive to any suggestions for the agenda. Our preliminary ideas centre on, inter alia, the following issues:

Which tasks should the OPCW perform immediately upon entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and which tasks can wait?

How should the OPCW be structured?

Which steps will be required to structure the OPCW, and in which order should these be carried out?

What are the implications, organizationally and otherwise, for the Preparatory Committee and the composition of its staff?

What kind of central laboratory or workshop is needed?

What are the data-handling requirements of the OPCW?

Financial questions.

No doubt, those topics will stimulate the participants in the seminar to engage in a lively and instructive brainstorming-type discussion, a discussion that could help set the stage for the future Preparatory Committee. After all, the PrepCom may already have to begin its work towards the end of this calendar year, or early in 1993. In short, the Netherlands delegation hopes that the seminar at The Hague will enlighten us as to the various institutional and practical tasks which probably will require our increasing attention during the months ahead.

As we prepare for the operation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, allow me to address another related practical aspect. The negotiations show that the future organization will require a highly qualified technical staff, particularly for data-handling and inspection functions. Several delegations from developing countries have pointed out that it may be difficult to find sufficiently qualified personnel from the developing world to work in the new organization. As a result, the recruitment of inspectors and other technical personnel might develop a bias in favour of the industrialized States. It seems to us that this is a valid observation. Unbalanced recruitment patterns must indeed be prevented.

Some years ago, Finland launched a laudable and successful programme to train chemical analysts from developing countries as a means of preparing for the effective implementation of the CW convention. Just now, Germany has

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

announced an interesting additional training programme, aimed especially at clarifying the practical aspects of on-site inspections of CW stockpiles and chemical industrial plants. The German programme is intended for participants in the Finnish training sessions, and is subsequent to these. Apparently, some other States are also considering organizing training courses for future inspectors from developing countries.

The Netherlands has decided to add its own contribution to this commendable endeavour. In the second half of June 1992, we will organize a training programme for about 10 graduates in chemical sciences from developing countries. Since the programme is somewhat comparable to the German one, it seems more efficient to invite other graduates than those already involved in the next Finnish course.

A detailed letter inviting applications for the course will soon be sent to all delegations concerned, be they CD members or CD observers.

The intensive programme will include practical training in the use of protective gear, decontamination measures, sampling and transport of highly toxic chemicals, recognition of chemical munitions and, possibly, a kind of trial inspection in an industrial plant. All costs, including travel costs, will be borne by our Ministry of Development Cooperation. The course will be given by the Netherlands Chemical Defence Organization, the Prince Maurits Laboratory of the Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to support what Ambassador von Wagner just said about the long lead-times involved in the effective training of candidate inspectors. I would join his urgent appeal to all those countries which consider establishing training programmes not to wait any longer but to take action now.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

Before we adjourn this plenary meeting, I wish to inform you of some pending questions with which we will be dealing at our next plenary meeting tomorrow. As is the practice of the Conference, we shall take up tomorrow, for adoption, the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, which was introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation at our 610th plenary meeting and was circulated as document CD/1116. As I announced last week, we shall then formalize agreement on the organizational arrangements to be followed for agenda items 2 and 3, on which consensus was achieved during presidential consultations. I wish to inform you also that we should consider, tomorrow, another request from a non-member for participation in the work of the Conference. The relevant communication from Malta was circulated in the delegation's boxes late last week. Since, so far, that

(The President)

request seems to be acceptable, I hope that we can dispense with convening an informal meeting to review it. In any case, it will also be considered this afternoon at presidential consultations, where we can dispense with that requirement.

I have no other business to consider today and I intend now to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held tomorrow, 13 February, at 10 a.m.

The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.